

## **SPEAKERS PANEL (LICENSING)**

**18 January 2022**

**Commenced:** 10.00 am

**Terminated:** 10.30 am

**Present:** Councillors Taylor (Chair), Quinn (Deputy Chair), Cartey, Lane, Lewis, North, Sweeton and Chadwick

**In Attendance:** Mike Robinson Regulatory Services Manager (Licensing)  
Rifat Iqbal Legal Representative – as an observer  
Ashleigh Melia Legal Representative

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Jackson and T Sharif

### **17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **18. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Speakers Panel (Licensing) meeting held on 16 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

### **19. APPLICATION FOR A VARIATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES**

The Assistant Director of Operations and Neighbourhoods submitted a report requesting that the Panel note the proposal to consult on an application for a variation of Hackney Carriage fares in accordance with the provisions of Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

The Regulatory Services Manager reported that the current Hackney Carriage fares were last reviewed in January 2018 – a copy of the current table of fares was appended to the report. A request had been received in November 2021 from the Tameside Owners and Drivers Association for a variation of the fare structure.

The Panel were notified that an informal consultation had been undertaken with the 148 Hackney Carriages that were licensed by the Council and 37 letters had been submitted that supported the variation and two letters opposed the application. A comparison of the current and proposed tariffs was attached to the report detailing the impact of the proposed changes. The consultation procedure was also detailed in the report.

John Vickerstaff and Asam Mehdi, Tameside Owners and Drivers Association, attended the meeting and outlined the reasons for the request for a variation of the fare structure. They explained that there had been a significant increase in the cost of living, and rises in insurance, road tax, running costs and the price of a Hackney Carriage. The Tameside Owners and Drivers Association fully supported the minimum licensing standards and wanted to see high and improving standards, which included investment in newer models and electric vehicles, both of which involved substantial costs. In addition, figures from the Department for Transport revealed that there had been a 22% reduction in the number of Tameside drivers over the previous two years. Although some of the reduction could be attributed to the effects of the pandemic, the rising costs that had been outlined had resulted in a reduction in 'take home pay'. The Tameside Owners and Drivers Association were

concerned that if Tameside continued to lose drivers the current level of service would not be sustainable.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that electric charging points located around Greater Manchester were now chargeable and although the Trade had been promised a reduced rate, it was yet to be implemented. Members enquired if consideration had been given to amending the time brackets of the day and night-time tariffs. The Tameside Owners and Drivers Association representatives responded that this had been considered following a benchmarking exercise with other Local Authorities in addition to a consultation with drivers but it was not supported. It was stated that the cost increases were the same regardless of the hour of the day and it was important to encourage drivers to work during the evening in order to maintain a 24-hour service to the residents of the Borough.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the proposal to consult on the application for a variation of Hackney Carriage fares be noted.**

**20. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIR**